



Dyslexia Professional Awareness

Check out the [IDOE Dyslexia Website](#) for more information on dyslexia screening, training, interventions and other important resources.

Indiana Code requires that the Department of Education (IDOE) shall ensure that each teacher receives professional awareness information on the characteristics of dyslexia and the evidence based intervention and accommodations for dyslexia. This information may be presented online or in person. To access online, visit moodle.doe.in.gov and search for “Dyslexia Professional Awareness”

Dyslexia Prevalence

According to federal and state statistics, approximately 42 percent of students identified with a disability have a Specific Learning Disability (SLD), and the majority of those students experience reading difficulty. Further, according to the National Institute of Health (NIH) and Yale Center for Dyslexia and Creativity, dyslexia affects, to some degree, nearly 20 percent of the population.

Definition and Aspects of Dyslexia

Indiana’s definition of dyslexia is taken from the International Dyslexia Association. Below the definition is broken down to highlight its different aspects

Dyslexia is distinguished from other learning disabilities due to weaknesses occurring at the phonological level. A student who has a weakness at the phonological level has difficulty manipulating units of oral language such as words, syllables, or individual sounds.

Dyslexia is a Specific Learning Disability. This means the student struggles with basic early reading and language problems. Dyslexia is neurobiological in nature and not due to educational or environmental factors. Family history is one of the strongest risk factors for struggling readers and developing the characteristics of dyslexia.

Dyslexia is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities. In the classroom, students with dyslexia may struggle with decoding or sounding out words, reading words accurately and fluently, and developing basic spelling skills.

These struggles typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language that is often unexpected in relation to other cognitive abilities, and the provision of effective classroom instruction. Typically, the reading difficulties a student experiences are not expected in relation to other academic strengths.

Secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge. For the student with the characteristics of dyslexia, the inability to decode fluently and accurately may impair the ability to comprehend text.

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General Characteristics of Dyslexia

Students “at risk” or “at some risk” for the characteristics of dyslexia may exhibit some or all of these general characteristics at some point across school and life: trouble decoding, reading single words, slow or poor fluency– like driving in traffic, poor spelling, struggles with oral manipulation of sounds and pronouncing words, limited vocabulary and comprehension skills, poor executive function, and family history of reading struggles.

This list is not inclusive of all characteristics. Not all children will exhibit all of these characteristics and they may vary in their severity.

Screening for Dyslexia

When screening for characteristics of dyslexia, schools will screen six areas: phonological and phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge, sound/symbol relationship, decoding, rapid automatized screening, and encoding. Please refer to IDOE’s Dyslexia Resource Guide for additional information.

For more information on the screening process please refer to the [dyslexia screener flowchart](#). Please check the [IDOE Dyslexia page](#), under the Dyslexia Screener tab for the most up-to-date list of approved universal, level I, and level II screeners.

Response to Intervention (RtI) and Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)

If the dyslexia screening process indicates the student is “at risk” or “at some risk” for characteristics of dyslexia, the school corporation or charter school shall use the RTI process to address the needs of the student. Additional information on RTI and MTSS may be found in [IDOE’s Dyslexia Resource Guide](#).

Accommodations

An accommodation is a change in timing, scheduling, setting, response, presentation regarding instruction, and assessment. This ensures access to the general education grade level curriculum for students with disabilities. An accommodation does not change learning expectations. Accommodations should enable students to participate more fully in instruction and assessments to better demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Accommodations should foster and facilitate independence for students. The case conference committee, which includes the parent, must base an accommodation on the individual needs of the student and not the category of the disability, level of instruction, or program setting. Accommodations are documented in the student’s IEP. A student may need accommodations in testing and scheduling, reading instruction, the classroom environment, writing instruction, various classroom instruction, homework, organization, and testing accommodations. A list of example accommodations can be found in [IDOE’s Dyslexia Resource Guide](#).